

UNITY

AND THE UNIVERSITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

VOLUME XVII.]

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ONE more testimonial from a busy worker away out in Iowa: "The leaflet 'Blessed be Drudgery' is the best I have ever seen. It ought to be in every tired woman's hands to read over and over. I assure you it cheered me immensely." The twelfth thousand of this tract has just been issued.

A RECENT number of Mr. Savage's *Unity Pulpit* contains a sermon on "Words". It is suggestive, as are all his sermons. Among the abuses of words he speaks of the ecclesiastical abuse that determines a man's orthodoxy or heterodoxy by the words he uses rather than by the spirit or the life.

THIS is the way Rev. John Page Hopps reviews a volume of lectures on "Sanitary Matters" addressed to the working people: "Missionaries, curates, and Bible-women, who so dearly love tracts, might usefully, for three months, lock up those on Hell and Blood, and distribute these on Disease and Dirt. Here is a veritable Gospel of Health."

FOR sufficient reason the Post-office Mission Committee of the Western Conference presented their report at Cincinnati in printed pamphlet form, but we shall greatly regret if on that account it does not fall under the eye of every reader of *UNITY*, as it is an exceedingly interesting and suggestive little document. The statistical summary at the close is so suggestive that we offer a few of the figures. The experience of eighteen places is tabulated besides that of "Others". During the year 2,713 letters and postal-cards have been sent, 1,486 letters and postal-cards have been received, 5,060 A. U. A. tracts have been distributed, 5,427 *Church-Door Pulpits* and "Unity Missions", 6,185

miscellaneous pamphlets, making a total of 32,142 ; 5,063 *Registers* have been distributed, 3,766 copies of *UNITY* ; and all this has been done at a cost of \$473.82 ; 1,814 different people have been reached as compared to 750 people last year. Is not this cheap missionary work ? And who can tell how far-reaching it may be ?

A CORRESPONDENT from the far west writing us *à propos* to the discussions on fellowship says: "Spiritual communion must necessarily be with God and his children who are spiritual, but as teachers and disciples do we not owe a fellowship of cordial good-will to all who seek the light and the higher freedom, the babes in faith and practice, even more than to the strong and the adult in the kingdom ?"

THE apprehensions of those who fear that the recent action of the W. U. C. at Cincinnati will lessen its working efficiency or practical hold on its constructive work, ought to be allayed when they remember that the W. W. U. C., the W. U. S. S. Society, nearly all the State Conferences within its limits, many of the most active and efficient of its churches, have been actually on this basis for several years,—and so has the Western Conference practically.

"THE CITIZEN" is the name of a new paper published in Boston under the auspices of the American Institute of Civics. It is a bright, clean paper with highest and noblest aims, and ought to prosper, but is not likely to do so unless its friends are prepared to make considerable sacrifices for it for several years—it is too good to prosper. Mrs. Kate Gannett Wells has a clear, incisive article in No. 3 upon Moral Education in the Public Schools.

A NEAT pamphlet containing the proceedings of the Pacific Coast Liberal Christian Conference, held at San Francisco last November, has been received. Our Pacific Coast friends merit our thanks for thus giving us so fully their best words on that occasion, and they set us a worthy example in the matter. If our Conference papers are worth going some hundreds of miles to hear, as they usually are, then they are worth printing.

It is fifty years ago in June that a little company of people gathered together in the Lake House, in what was then the village of Chicago, to hear the first Unitarian sermon ever preached in the state of Illinois. It was a small, but in its way a notable assemblage; men and women were there who have since been foremost in all the better activities that have made Chicago what it is to-day, and as it happened, Harriet Martineau, from across the waters, was present. On the 29th of June, 1836, the first Unitarian Society of Chicago was organized, an event which is to be duly celebrated by the First Church this year. But on account of the anniversary of the organization coming at a season when so many of the church people are either gone or going away, the celebration of it has been postponed, to take place early in the autumn. All old settlers and all who know of people who were interested in the early Unitarianism of this state, are

requested, by correspondence and otherwise, to awaken an interest in the celebration of this semi-centennial anniversary. A committee has been appointed by the First Church, of which Mr. Utter is chairman, to whom all correspondence concerning the matter may be addressed.

As we go to press Boston tides with anniversary congratulations and inspirations. The full programme published in last week's *Register* seems very attractive from this distance. We shall be greatly disappointed if the returns therefrom are not the most prophetic and encouraging. The disappointment caused by the interruption of the strikes which made it impossible to dedicate the new Unitarian headquarters this week will find its compensation in the thought that about the middle of June they can have it all over again.

JOHN H. CLIFFORD, in a recent discourse, remarked the significance of the fact that the very Episcopalian delegates who opposed the Rev. Nelson McVickar's elevation to the assistant-bishopric at Philadelphia, because of his "heretical" attendance at the Unitarian convention, turned about and gave hearty support to Phillips Brooks, whose whole mature life has been spent in an endeavor to spread the wings of the broader faith to cover all mankind. And the strange contradiction is indeed a straw on the wind by which more than words or life-promises can divulge is made plain.

H. L. T.

HID away in an old copy of the *Radical* (November, 1871,) is a paper on "Labor Parties and Labor Reform", by Samuel Johnson, which might be well worth republication at this perturbed moment. The noble power with which Johnson advises the world that it cannot build everlasting personalities upon any sacrifice of individual freedom, or upon the omnipotence of legalism, might teach a forcible lesson to capitalists and trades unions and politicians who, in this year, 1886, are too apt to forget what private beauty of character has to do with the amelioration of social wrong and distress.

H. L. T.

THE Georgia Presbyterians in assembly at Augusta have declared against evolution and that "the Presbyterian church is still convinced that Adam and Eve were made, body and soul, out of nothing; and that any doctrine at variance with this is dangerous because it involves a method of Biblical interpretation which would lead to other denials." We think the Georgia Presbyterians are clear-headed, and commend their consistency to brethren farther north. If there was no Adam there was no Garden of Eden; no Apple, no Fall; no certainty of endless perdition and no need of a vicarious sacrifice and a crucified God. Let the Presbyterians stand by Adam, for much depends on him.

JOHN W. CHADWICK, in a personal letter to one of the editors of *UNITY*, says:

"When I read *UNITY*'s notice of John Howard Bryant's 'Poems Written from Youth to Old Age', I thought that if the writer had known the beautiful old man as well as I do, though I do not know him well, he would have written differently. But, perhaps, the critic should not know the man of whom he writes. From all that I can learn of William Cullen Bryant I should think that his brother John had a warm poetical nature, with less gift of expression. John's love of nature is certainly as keen as William's ever was, and I find in his poems many lines in which this love declares itself in an effective manner. I like the sincerity of his poems. There are no larks and nightingales in them, and no simulated emotions. He writes of things that he has actually seen and of delights and sorrows he has actually felt. He shapes his phrases to the things and the event to a degree that shames many of our merely literary poets. His eye is truer than his ear, but many of his verses have a pleasant swing, and some of the poems have a finished excellence. Take, for

example, the poem called 'The Valley Brook'. If I remember rightly, this was William's favorite, and I think he once included it in an edition of his own poems. Lovers of nature will find many lines and phrases here to quicken happy recollections, and I must confess the rugged honesty throughout is more to me than the self-conscious daintiness which is so much in vogue at present."

NOTHING is more inspiring in the Unitarian fellowship to-day than to contemplate the number of young old men among us. Doctor Hedge, fresh and strong at 83, is to preach the opening sermon at the Saratoga Conference. Doctor Furness, of Philadelphia, well on toward the nineties, has still a fresh word to say and strength to say it. Our earnest fellow-worker, Rev. J. S. Brown, of Lawrence, Kansas, who has passed his 80th anniversary, recently preached for Mr. Howland upon "Spiritual Religion" and a local paper speaks of the wonderful amount of energy both mental and physical. When gray hairs are "young for liberty" and look hopefully forward there is little cause of alarm from the jeremiads which boys may chant in doleful accents.

A CORRESPONDENT in thus recognizing "Iowa's danger," states the danger of the American people, and perhaps that of the would-be Christian world of this generation: "The danger among our reformers just now is that in the passion for legislation they forget that law needs reinforcement of what George Eliot calls 'spiritual police'. The bills for marriage, divorce, charities, education, temperance and suffrage that crowded our legislature show, however, the trend of popular thought. They are attempts at the solution of the great problems of life. They are hopefully suggestive of an earnest element in our American life beneath all its sensuous, selfish surface." We print this quotation not because we disbelieve in the potency or legitimacy of legislation concerning these great questions of reform, but because with our correspondent we are anxious to keep public sentiment and public conscience up to that standard which alone makes legislation effective.

UNITY SUNDAY CIRCLES.

I.

THE MATERIAL.

The writer of these articles was asked to read a paper at the recent conference at Cincinnati on "The Unitarian Church That Is Practicable In Every Western Town". This subject he declined because he did not believe that such a church, in a sectarian sense, was either practicable or desirable in more than a very few western towns. Already every little hamlet of 2,000 people or over has its five or more dogmatic churches. Within the last twenty years these have been housed at a cost of about \$50,000. By hook or crook they manage to extort a reluctant support at the cost of \$8,000 or \$10,000 *per annum*, and such a town, with few exceptions, is without a public library; it cannot sustain a reputable course of public lectures; it probably has no park, kindergarten, or free reading-room; and probably one-half of the population are without vital life-helping relations to any of the churches. Now, to go into that community with another *ism*, to try to establish another theological camp, another school of disputation, is not only impracticable, but in most cases unjustifiable and deplorable. Father Taylor said, "The Good Samaritan did not maul the wounded traveler with texts." And he who would help this western village ought to be very careful lest he inflict on it another battle of words, and in the name of religion embitter the sources of the religious life.

But there are those in every community not only of 2,000 inhabitants, but every country cross-road where there are but two stores, a blacksmith shop and saloon, who have so far committed themselves to free thought, trusted to reason and tasted of science, that they can never find congenial fellowship or helpful ministrations in any of the existing churches. And we believe there are enough

of these to make the nucleus of a church that may grow into a spiritual home to those who without it must remain homeless. The material for the beginning of this new church, if there be any, must be found in the main not inside, but outside, of existing churches. The leaders in this new movement must say "Let the Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Universalists and Unitarians, if their methods are to be doctrinal and they are to insist on theological text-lines, take all they can and welcome, bless them as they will! We will be content with what is left, the unutilized elements. Our hope is to church the unchurched. We will not be frightened away from our opportunity by any bugbear of words, such as Rationalists, Skeptics, Agnostics, Spiritualists, Materialists, Free Religionists, Ethical-Culturists, Universalists, or what not." Now there is scarcely a community so small but that has one representative at least of each of these names. Possibly there may be one or two who know of the Unitarian movement and cherish the name. Now these men and women may be wrong in most of their intellectual conclusions. They may be criminal in their indifference to or uncertainty in their theological opinions. But the new church that is most needed is one that will utilize this material. We are familiar with what has been said in derision of this "motley crowd of Liberals in a western town", and the wide spread suspicion of the missionary movements that would seek to utilize this material, but we know enough about these people not to be afraid of them. Nay, we believe in them. From an extended study we are prepared to maintain that they are not so motley as they seem. Generally the unchurched in a western community contains the best as well as the lowest of that community, and in order to help the lowest and meanest we must secure the co-operation of the highest and wisest. Looking back in a large way upon history we see how those whom the church once called doubters are now crowned as God's great believers, and what is true of the past very often is true of the particular western community in question. Among the unchurched there are some splendid elements of faith and hopeful possibilities of religious life and work.

MR. SUNDERLAND'S "ISSUE IN THE WEST", AND THE TRUE ISSUE.

Mr. Sunderland, for the last two years secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, just before the Cincinnati meeting sent far and wide among our churches, east and west, a pamphlet called "The Issue in the West: Is western Unitarianism ready to give up its Christian character? Is it ready to give up its theistic character?" In it he reviews the whole trouble that has been disturbing our western churches since his declarations at St. Louis a year ago, and answers the arguments which UNITY has put forth in behalf of a purely ethical, as distinguished from a doctrinal, basis for our Unitarian fellowship, and earnestly pushes his plea for a basis of the latter kind. The pamphlet is long—ten pages of UNITY in length—and we cannot follow it in detail. We have the author's permission to mail it for five cents to any one requesting it. So far as its wording is concerned, it is courteous throughout, and we are glad to repeat once more our belief in Mr. Sunderland's fair intent and conscientiousness in all this matter. He speaks plainly, however: so shall we. So must we, for the pamphlet, spite of its fair intent, does the western churches great injustice. Two or three fundamental misconceptions run through all its forty-five pages. To these we give attention. In our judgment Mr. Sunderland misconceives the "issue" he has done so much to raise; he misconceives his own position; he misconceives our position.

(1) First, he misconceives, and so of course mis-states the "issue in the West". His questions on the cover of his pamphlet ask, "Is western Unitarianism ready to give up its Christian and its theistic character?" Would one believe that he broadcasts this question on the public with special

reference to the course of brother ministers of his, who pray, who preach, who print sermons and books, who build churches, who issue tracts, who publish declarations of Unitarian beliefs, who write Sunday-school manuals, who edit papers—who do all this week after week, year after year, as theists, as worshippers, as, in a broad sense, Christians? This to his full knowledge and admission. But none the less, with the ex-secretary's voice behind them, those questions still apply to us, and we are on the high-road to non-Christianity and non-theism, and are plunging the denomination over Niagara—because why? Because we frankly welcome to our "Unitarian" name those who do not call themselves Christian and theist. Unless we *exclude* such men, or at the very least such ministers, from the "Unitarian" fellowship, we are getting ready to give up Christianity and theism. That is Mr. Sunderland's implication. Is it logical? Is it just? We will not speculate about the worth of the Christianity and theism, or the Unitarianism, of which such implication *would* be just, but will answer his misleading questions again as they were answered in the smaller public of the Conference. The trouble and injustice is that, when such questions have once been flung out to the winds, no answer can follow and speedily correct the untrue impression which they give. "Is western Unitarianism ready to give up its Christian* character?" No. "Is it ready to give up its theistic character?" No. But this is not the issue in the west. That issue is, "Is western Unitarianism ready to exclude from its name and from its full co-equal fellowship the non-Christian or non-theist who feels himself drawn to us by moral and spiritual affinities?" And again, we think that most western Unitarians answer, *No, we will include him heartily.* That is the true issue in the west, and that third No is the meaning of the Conference vote just passed, as we understand it. The Conference virtually means, We believe many things, great and dear, but whatever we believe ourselves, *the basis of our fellowship* shall be not "doctrinal" at all, but rather whatsoever lies in the expression, "all who wish to join us to help establish truth and righteousness and love in the world".

(2) Next, Mr. Sunderland misconceives his own position. Let our readers read his pamphlet and judge. All the way through he urges a creed and in the same breath insists it is no creed. He calls it a "platform", calls it "standing for" certain beliefs, etc. Of course the question turns on what constitutes a "creed". His own definition is "a formulated, systematized statement of theological doctrine, made out and imposed by some supposed ecclesiastical authority,—synod, council, or other." Our definition is rather simpler than this: a creed is a *doctrinal test of religious fellowship*. It need not be an elaborate and systematic statement; it need not be formally imposed by a synod or the like; it may be a single doctrine, and it may be imposed informally by general understanding; but if it be a theological doctrine and practically be urged in any way as a "*Crede!*" as a "Believe this doctrine or you are excluded from our fellowship", that, both in letter and in spirit, both in theory and in effect, is a "creed". Are we wrong in this? If not, we do not see how the man whose whole point often repeated is, "Does Unitarianism mean necessarily God and worship, or does it not?" can claim he has no "creed". Once he frankly lays aside that claim and owns, "We have a creed, if to hold that Unitarianism is necessarily theistic and Christian is a creed",—adding, "But if this is a creed, then to believe that Unitarianism is necessarily ethical, must also be a creed." Of this *but*,

* There may be others, but the writer knows of no western Unitarian minister, save one, besides himself who has ever surrendered this name "Christian". That was at the east a dozen years or more ago, at the time when the National Conference, as I thought, was making it a shibboleth of fellowship. In no such sense as that, I knew, could I claim title to the name. Coming west in '77, I found a very different church atmosphere, where such name-questions were not raised—till very lately—and the name had kept nobility, its historical and ideal values all its own. In the east, too, such values have largely been restored to it—especially of late. With such values secure, the same sort of motives that once prompted surrender of the name prompts grateful self-surrender to the name. There may be one or two, but the writer thinks there is no western Unitarian minister who has ever surrendered the name theist.

we speak further on. It avails nothing to talk about holding doctrines "in a large way, a fluent and elastic way, in an undogmatic and non-credal way", when his whole point is the *necessity* of holding them. It avails nothing to call it "standing for" the great faiths, when his whole trouble with us who share these faiths with him is that we don't say to a man, "You *must* hold them to be a Unitarian." To our mind the resolution which Mr. Sunderland offered at the Cincinnati Conference (and which we are sorry we forgot in our story of the meeting, in the last *UNITY*) is transparent self-contradiction, especially when looked at in the light of his persistently pushed issue: it read—"Resolved, that while opposing all creeds as tests of fellowship, we deem it proper to declare that the Western Unitarian Conference, as a body, stands for and represents faith in one God, in immortality, in worship, and in personal righteousness as exemplified in the example and teaching of Jesus Christ." This seems to us formulating a creed in the very act of disowning one; explicitly denying, while implicitly establishing, one. Again and again he counseled us to write over our doors the great central doctrines: did he not know that such advertisement would warn off those who could not hold them, as having in our house no business? Nay, did he not *mean* to warn them off, or, at the utmost, mean to tell them they would be welcome as the guests of Unitarians, but not as fellow-Unitarians? And among these would surely be some whose very religiousness and depth of faith would keep them from approaching where "the body" thus challenged them in its very form of invitation. Another sort of "banner" resolution was offered at the Conference—to *first* throw wide open the Unitarian fellowship, by placing it upon an ethical basis, and *then* to state the things, the doctrines, most commonly believed to-day among us—to state them expressly as the voice of the majority and as always open to restatement. This would have been exactly honest, and exactly fair; it would have kept out none who were willing to be in a minority that had co-equal rights with the majority; it would have given opportunity for stating, what is simple fact, that the vast majority of us share essentially the very faiths which Mr. Sunderland believes. The Conference did not pass this resolution, but who originated and who voted for it? Some of the very men against whom Mr. Sunderland has raised his whole long cry. And they heartily meant the proposition. Did Mr. Sunderland vote for it, or against it? Why would not *that* have satisfied him, provided he really did not want a "creed" and something that would *necessarily* cover *all*? If he voted against it, still more pertinent becomes the question,—In conceiving that he wants no creed, has not Mr. Sunderland really misconceived his own position?

(3) Mr. Sunderland misconceives *our* position, also. Doubtless that is in part our fault. We will start again from the beginning and try to state it briefly. For the same thing in longer measure, see articles in *UNITY* of Jan. 16, 23, 30, Feb. 13, and March 20.

"Religion" words man's sense of universal relations, however the universe or his relations to it be conceived. In regard to this all-comprehending subject we hold him to be "Unitarian" who emphasizes Freedom, Fellowship and Character as his three grand emphases. *Freedom* in religion, *i. e.*, the method of free reason in reaching religious convictions, as against the method of tradition or outward authority transcending reason. *Fellowship* in religion, *i. e.*, the spirit of brotherhood in all religious matters, as against the spirit of sect; the spirit which seeks the unities in religious thought and experience, as against that which builds the fence and urges the variance. *Character* in religion, *i. e.*, emphasis on character as the supreme thing in religion, transcending in importance all intellectual conceptions ("doctrines") whatever. These three, and of these the last as greatest. It has been asked why to these three we do not add other great words, such as "truth,

service, self-sacrifice, etc., in religion". (1) Because this "F., F. and C. in R." is but a motto, a watch-word, and it is not worth while to dump the dictionary into a motto. (2) Because it already implies many of these other words. For a motto it seems singularly all-round and expressive; its trinity of words respectively recognizing the head, heart and will-sides of our human nature. But the phrase is no fetich to us. The *Christian Register's* inscription would do as well—"Liberty, Love, Holiness". So would the words which happened to get into the resolution adopted at Cincinnati—"truth, love and righteousness". In each case the triple reference suggests the mind, heart, will, in religion. There is another great word which right willingly we would admit save for one reason: it is *worship*. And the reason it does not enter is because to most minds it still carries a more than ethical significance: it is the gate through which for them the "God"-doctrine quietly passes in. That is why some friends want it in the motto, and that is why it must stay out; because this motto is not a summary of our intellectual beliefs, but indicates the basis of our fellowship, and we *mean* that basis to be ethical, not theological.

These three emphases we have called the "principles" of Unitarianism in contra-distinction to its "doctrines" or "beliefs",—supposing the distinction would be readily understood. But in that we were mistaken. Others besides Mr. Sunderland—he strenuously in his pamphlet—object that these three "principles" are *beliefs* also, being something believed: indeed they are. And that they are *doctrines* also, being something taught: Amen. And that to hold these as the essential basis of Unitarianism is as much a *creed* as to make theism and belief in immortality the basis: then we do not wince at the word "creed",—but of this, later. But did we really confuse common words in distinguishing between the Unitarian "principles" and "doctrines", or are our friends confusing things by blurring the distinction? Possibly a line or two can make our meaning plainer. The "principle" of Freedom (free reason) in religion names the *intellectual method* by which, as Unitarians hold, men ought to reach their religious convictions, whatever they may be—such as beliefs or non-beliefs in God, in Christ, in the Bible, in immortality, in vicarious atonement, and the like. The "doctrines" (doctrinal beliefs) are the specific conceptions and convictions reached. The "principle" names an *intellectual method*; the "doctrinal beliefs" are certain intellectual *results* reached by that method. The "principle" names a *road*; the "doctrines" are the *camping-places* on that road, some of which abide, while some do not. Is not the distinction plain,—and real, and vital? None the less it is true that the choice of this road, the choice of Free Reason as the transcendent method of attaining truth, itself involves a mighty primary conviction, namely, the adequacy of the faculty of reason for the task: but this is a conviction so primary and mighty that it lies all by itself in its importance (in its nature, also, we suspect) as compared with any view, however grand, to which the road may lead us. This, therefore, our *intellectual method* in religion, we called one of the fundamental Unitarian "principles". And this is the only one of the three concerning which we think there can be any real confusion; for as to the other two—the spirit of brotherhood, and the supremacy of character—it is surely easy to feel the difference between these ethical convictions and any "doctrines"—intellectual conceptions—like those mentioned a moment since.

Now what we pointed out by a bit of retrospect (in *UNITY* of Jan. 23) was that Unitarianism in America has always been a conglomerate of these its principles with certain doctrines; that the principles and doctrines have been held jointly essential to the name and fellowship; that this involves self-contradiction, the principle of free reason and our loud claim of "no creed" excluding the right to make any doctrinal belief whatever an essential test of fellowship; that this inconsistency has been gradually recognized; and that, in consequence, our doctrines, whether still believed

or not by us, have steadily lost emphasis as essentials in this sense; that, for instance, Bible Revelation, Miracles, Lordship of Christ, Christianity as a technical term, have all within sixty years successively vanished from among us, not as beliefs, but as beliefs *that condition fellowship*, leaving proportionately increased stress upon our "principles". And we said that the time had now come for Unitarianism to recognize and proclaim the fact that its "principles" *alone*, and not its "doctrinal beliefs" at all, gave title to our name; and we applied this to the greatest belief of all, belief in "God". The question whether or not one could enjoy a minister, or could employ a minister, who did not share this belief, if such a minister there be, we added was a question for individuals and individual congregations to decide. That way, as we think, trends the logic of our history, and that way lies our highest spiritual service to the world.

And here comes in again Mr. Sunderland's confusion of the "issue". He objects to our historic argument and its implication; says that it amounts to advising one's father, who is eating less and less as he grows old, to at last eat none,—that it is like approaching nearer and nearer to Niagara and at last going over. Yes, Mr. Sunderland, exactly so,—less and less of dogma *as condition of fellowship*, and at last NONE,—total abstinence! Nearer and nearer to *that* brink, and at last OVER! Over, into glory! into the glorious liberty of the spirit of—"Christ", if you will—that strong faith that broke bars between the Jew and Gentile and upgathered and unified the old religions on a higher plane. Over,—we mean exactly that. And if your mind does not see the difference between holding no doctrine, and holding no doctrine *as test of fellowship*, we can scarcely argue with you. The confusion of these two things is your fundamental misconception, the source of all your panic about western Unitarianism, of all your year-long misrepresentation of your brethren. To us, as to you, theism as idea is the growing recognition, the inevitable faith, the ever greating glory: and this inevitable theism we distinctly mean ought not to be belittled into—condition of Unitarian fellowship! When so belittled, it belittles the fellowship. Our fellowship should stand in ethical and spiritual affinities and not in the intellectual conceptions of theology. *That* way, that *spiritual* way, lies transfiguration for theology, lies realizing of the theism. Let us not use the great name "God" as fencing-stuff to bar out men! "Christianity" as a name has been well-nigh spoilt by just such use, has been much injured even by ourselves: there are Unitarians, who, as long as they live, will never feel again the uplift of that name, because of the use made of it among us a few years ago. Let us not degrade "theism" so, and spoil that too. *That* use vilifies the name; that unspiritualizes, materializes it; that brings it into shibboleth-contempts; that begins to make "God" a name for the thoughtful and most reverent to avoid; that sets men seeking some new name for the Great One, which has not been dogma-dwarfed.

You call this "revolutionary",—we, evolutionary. It takes away your breath, you say. So does it ours,—with the joy of the thought that at last perhaps there shall be a church in Christendom whose members shall be the very prophets of the Highest, while they will *not* make his name the bar, or door, of fellowship among them. The necessity of classification is alluded to,—we must stand somewhere to be known and characterized, it is said. We offer this, then, as a class-definition of ourselves for to-day: Unitarians are a body mainly theists, worshippers, Christians,—in some cases, intensely these,—who yet expressly open fullest fellowship to those who are *not* theists, worshippers and Christians; who open it to all who wish to join them to help establish truth and righteousness and love in the world; who think they attest the depth of their faith in God by doing this; and who think, further, that in this hour of the world, the day-dawn of the twentieth century, a Church of just such believers of God is mustering among the differing sects, and that the important question

for themselves is whether they shall be found worthy to join it at all,—and next, whether they shall be found worthy *enough* to bear early its reproach, and so perhaps to give it name and share its joyous leadership.

And now to return again to the word "creed" as applied to these "principles" of Unitarianism thus held. Mr. Sunderland says that our motto, as used by us, constitutes a creed as truly as his "necessary" theism. The word creed has always meant, we think, a *doctrinal* test of religious fellowship—using "doctrine" in the usual theologic sense. Mr. Sunderland's own definition, quoted above, points this way. But if any one wishes to turn or enlarge its meaning and apply it to these "principles" of ours—the intellectual method of Free Reason in religion, and the emphases on Fellowship and Character—then we do not wince at the word "creed". Only let the difference between theological ideas and moral ideals be well remembered. Should one care to call the Cincinnati resolution with its welcome to fellow workers trying to establish "truth and righteousness and love in the world" a "creed", so be it. Such creeds as these fit very well with the Charity chapter and the Sermon on the Mount. They have not killed many people yet, nor made many heart-aches. Perhaps the more of them the better for the world for some time yet. "Creed", then, with this new sense remembered, it shall be: for in all frankness we *do* mean—let Mr. Sunderland make the most of this—that those three principles are for us the essentials of Unitarianism, in such sense that they who really deny them do not seem to us incipient Unitarians, while they who but vaguely hold them seem Unitarians incomplete. We are more strenuous about this "creed" of ours than our friends for their theistic creed. For when their liberality has gone its full length, it in some sort stretches way through the church until it butts against the pulpit: they say, With our churches once planted on some simple Christian basis, your non-theist, your atheist, may be full church member with us, may be church officer, may be anything among us save a Unitarian minister. (Are the ethics of that invitation and its acceptance quite correct?) But not so liberal we about *our* "creed": we should not want the man who deliberately ranked tradition or outward authority as such above Reason in religion, nor one who ranked the sect spirit above the spirit that unites and fellowships, nor one who ranked doctrinal beliefs above character, to be our church officer or Sunday-school teacher. We mean this deeply. These "principles" of ours are radical, are fundamental, are the basis of our fellowship, are a *test* against which we can measure the stature of a Unitarian; and we think a man deliberately denying them would recognize his own outsideness to us. Scarcely can it be conceived that he would not. For these "principles" are self-acting, self-announcing. Far more than our "doctrines", it is these which give us tone and temperament, which constitute our climate, and decide our spiritual affinities.

But the man himself—not we—shall apply the test to himself: we have such perfect trust in the self-revealing quality of spirit, that we know, whether he will or not, he must apply it. And *if*, in the course of human events, a mind destitute of these "principles" should find his way among us, it may be by accident, or, it may be, drawn by some still sub-conscious current, and should call himself a "Unitarian",—then we would *not* discrown him. We think we should not ask him, "Is it ethical?" We think we should not point to the door and print the query, "Can there be doubt as to what you ought to do?" We would not raise an "issue" over him, nor make heart-ache in all the churches for him, nor shatter Conferences for him, nor misrepresent (you have not *meant* to do it, dear Sunderland!) the course of brethren who had welcomed him. We would do none of these things. We would let him go if he would go, or stay to grow if he would grow. He would find not a few companions here among us,—Unitarians incomplete. In truth, we are all

that. He should stay and wear his crown, the bright crown of our name, until it made him kingly with the rest.

We cannot send this article in the track of Mr. Sunderland's pamphlet: and would not, if we could. But the truth in it will sift through and carry both the light of facts and the light of an ideal. This "issue" will grow clearer, and, whatever sadness happens on the way, it will lift us all at last. But let us not be hasty, friends! If one word of ours could reach each western church and eastern friend, that word would be, *Judge slowly: give the light time to rise.*

W. C. G.

Contributed Articles.

THE VICTORY.

Too long, O soul, with thine own self contending,
Hast thou forgotten God's great gift to thee;
Too long thy passions, all their fetters rending,
Have madly striven 'gainst the mind's decree.

Too long that mind that should have set men thinking,
And fed the cravings of the human heart,
In weakness from its inner conflicts sinking,
Forgot the glory of the poet's art.

But now I see thy long-drawn conflict ended,
And all thy impious foes at last o'erthrown.
Like Him who on aerial plains contended,
Thou sit'st triumphant on thy challenged throne.

No more will some vain dream thy foes awaken,
Nor some harsh word thy conquered pride inflame.
No more thy purpose shall on earth be shaken,
Nor lose the vision of its truest fame.

Go thou, O soul, no more with passion burning,
And do the work which God assigns to thee.
Go thou, O mind, from all thy weakness turning
And make men own thy sovereign majesty.

Go show the world what power one soul possesses,
That fears no danger from a foe within;
Go show the courage that no loss represses
When once it feels its triumph over sin.

And thy dominion by no sea is bounded,
Thy work shall live in every age and clime,
And men to whom thy name is never sounded
Will feel the power of a soul sublime.

H. R. McCARTNEY.

OLIVET, Michigan.

HENRY WARD BEECHER'S "EVOLUTION AND RELIGION".

Whoever reads this new installment of sermons* will be compelled to pay a certain tribute of admiration to the author for his courage and his power. And when we think of the great circle of those who hear him from week to week, of the vastly larger circle who read him from week to week—his sermons (as I suppose) being published simultaneously in several great cities of the land—then of thousands more distinct from either class, who will now become the owners and readers of these discourses gathered into book form, we can but feel that this man is still wielding a great influence in forming the religious thought and tendencies of the age.

Nominally, he stands within the pale of orthodoxy. Many will listen to him, therefore, who would refuse to hear the same doctrines taught by one who bore the name of some heresy. Yet really his theological position is, with

immaterial differences, that of Theodore Parker. He is only ecclesiastically conservative; he is intellectually radical. Indeed, he is doctrinally as far in advance of certain old school Unitarian views as they were in advance of the Calvinism from which they were driven out. For the orthodoxy of the creeds there is only danger and dynamite in this book, and Mr. Beecher is making no end of trouble for the guardians of the faith, in their eyes doubtless imperiling the salvation of souls. Let us see what the rising generation will find in this book, and contrast it, if you please, with the old faith of the fathers.

The Lord's supper, so exclusive and particular once, has grown hospitable, showing that the old distinctions and fears are gone. At the close of one of his sermons he says:

"I affectionately invite all those who are in the providence of God, among us to-day, to remain and join with us in this very simple service of love, though they be not members of any church. . . . It is not a technical church institution. It is administered by the church because of convenience, fitness; but you have a right to the Lord's Supper in your own house, among your own family, administered by your own hands. You have as much right to the Lord's Supper as you have to the Lord's Bible."—p. 243.

On another occasion he said:

"I do not ask you to partake with us of these emblems because you are members of this church, though that ought not to discourage you; nor because you are a member of any other church, though that does not necessarily disqualify you. . . . [If you] are willing to lead Christ-like lives—on this ground I invite you, man, woman and child, to partake of the Lord's Supper."—p. 338.

Mr. Beecher sees clearly the impossibility of union on these outward forms of religion:

"I do not believe that the church can harmonize on ordinances or needs to do so. I let men have their ordinances if they please. They are playthings on a spiritual ground."—p. 399.

But he sees no better hope of union upon dogmatic grounds:

"A certain phase of orthodoxy says: 'You must subscribe to the Trinity or not come into the church.' What is the law on which it proceeds and by which it judges a man? . . . Men go into the most unfathomable realms of human thought, take the most difficult of all conceivable speculations, and make them the condition of church membership; if a man believes in them he may be in the church, but if he does not believe in them he shall not be in the church."—p. 159.

"But there is no accounting for the folly of men when they have undertaken to regulate other men's consciences and beliefs. When a man thinks that he is a celestial hound set on the track of heresy, with his nose for a conscience, and scents his prey afar off, and starts off with tail up and ears set, farewell sense, farewell honor, farewell humanity, farewell everything."—p. 160.

"I do not know that there ever was a period in which thinking, educated men were so unsettled as they are now concerning the nature and existence of God. There is no use of hiding these things. It is of no use to say that a man must be a fool who does not believe in a God."—p. 433.

"When you undertake to express, therefore, by formal definition of theology, God and the Trinity, and undertake to crowd men up to what you believe, you disgust one part and they fall off and don't believe anything; you repress another into indifferentism, or you mislead men into an endless bog of inquiries and uncertainties and difficulties. It is not necessary that men should believe just alike. It is necessary men should believe justice."—p. 397.

He illustrates variations in belief by the most complimentary notices of Doctor Thomas and Professor Swing, of Chicago, and of Heber Newton, of New York, and he asks:

"How came a man to have imposed upon him ordination oaths that take away from him the divine liberty of thought and speech? It is the church that is criminal, and not the man of light. No [religious] organization has a right to exist that cannot hold within its bounds a man who gives evidence that he is the Lord's in his temper and in his whole disposition and life."—p. 377. "When men cry out, therefore, about laxity and infidelity, I hear in these sounds the music of heaven. It is the sign and the token that God has appeared in the world and that the light is growing stronger and stronger."—p. 382.

Of the popular theory of the atonement he declares,

"That doctrine is as infernal as if it had been an inspired and revelatory doctrine coming up from the pit itself. . . . Any view of the divine nature that makes him first angry and then placated is

*New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert.

blasphemous. It is not only not orthodox, but it is as heterodox as hell."—p. 285.

And yet he says,

"Armies of young ministers swear to preach substantially this doctrine, this absolutely blasphemous system of representation. They swear to preach it, not knowing what they do. By and by when they wake up to a consciousness of what that system is, they are silent... I am not beating down a man of straw: I am beating a mummy that still stands in its environment in the confessions of the world to-day, and that every generation of ministers swears to believe in and preach." "There can be nothing more disastrous to the moral sense of the generation, than for men to hold one view secretly and to preach another view publicly. It is intellectual dishonesty."—pp. 285-6.

"I would not go to heaven with that infernal confession to which I once subscribed—God forgive my ignorance! I have said, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' I abhor it, because I love God, and there is hope between God and living men."—p. 292.

"If our Sunday-schools go on using books that are founded on the notions of five hundred years ago, and do not explain to our young men and women what is the actual truth of these things, they will grow up outside of the church, and feeling that they have been deceived in the church and not instructed, they will be infidel. It is not a question whether we will take a new view or not: it is a question whether we will instruct the young men of the community, or let them be instructed by the unbelieving. I object to the mode of hiding the light agreed to and accepted by the great body of scholars in France, in England and in America; and if our churches never bring one ray of that light which is now universal among scholars, to the minds of the common people, they are preparing them for infidelity."—p. 421.

It would be interesting to extend these quotations further. But enough have been given to indicate the trend and vigor of Mr. Beecher's preaching to-day. Many will be attracted to what he says of himself, his own experience in the last twenty or thirty years, his growing at length into "perfect sympathy with what is known as the school of advanced thought", "a gradual change corroborated year after year by investigation". "There is but one orthodoxy, that of the heart", he affirms. And the influence of the book, for all who are reached by it, will be to place motive and conduct and humane feeling far above the theology of the churches: in fact, it will lead to contempt for the creeds, and resistance of all efforts at uniformity on that basis.

J. C. L.

A RECENT PAMPHLET.

On reading Mr. Sunderland's pamphlet "The Issue in the West", I distinctly remembered having read a very similar one, I think during the year 1859 or 1860, the author of which I cannot remember, but think it was written by one who termed himself a Channing Unitarian. I think he was a minister of some note living in Boston, though as to his residence I may be mistaken. It was a tract or pamphlet of four leaves, closely printed, in small type, and note size. It was a warning to all Unitarians not to be led astray by the heretical and irreligious teachings of Theodore Parker. The author saw a complete abandonment of Unitarian landmarks in the writings and teachings of Parker; he saw in them not only the disintegration of Unitarian societies and Unitarian people, but the inevitable annihilation of the church, and the spread of heresies that would go far towards destroying belief in religion. It is, to say the least, a little amusing that now, after the lapse of more than a quarter of a century, I read from the pen of a sincere cultured Christian gentleman another warning,—this time not against Parker, for he says that Channing and Parker were among the great historic leaders of the Unitarian church. Does not this suggest the query, What will the young man who is now 23 or 24 years of age and reads Brother Sunderland's pamphlet read a quarter of a century hence?

The burthen of Brother Sunderland's fears seems to be that the doctrines taught by certain Unitarian ministers will produce a disbelief in theism. What is theism? The belief or acknowledgment of the existence of a God, as opposed to atheism. Not necessarily one who believes in a personal God with certain surroundings, seated on a great

white throne, but he that sees in the first cause—I may say the producing cause—of all things a point to which scientific research cannot extend; he that sees a power behind and beyond all scientific inquiry—a power which is the author of all things,—a person entertaining this belief is a theist, and I know that very many Unitarians have this conception of God, and they regard all metaphysical or ethical investigation as necessary to a correct apprehension of the laws of God. It then follows that it is impossible to separate that which is ethical from that which is theistical, as the former is but a study of the sequences issuing from the latter.

Within the memory of many now living Channing was called an extremist, a radical. A quarter of a century after his death he was called a conservative. Theodore Parker was then chief in the radical group. Parker is now a conservative and others are the radicals. It is only fair to presume that this feeling will go on and ever on. This is a progressive world; we are but on the frontier of an immense forest of truths, each of which is a law of God, and each of us should penetrate as far into this forest of truth as we can. The farther we go the better will we understand the laws of God, and the nearer will we approach divine excellence. To make no effort in this direction would be to say that we had drunk to the bottom of the fountain of knowledge. Indeed, it would be to say that we had learned all of God's truths—that we were completed. Brother Sunderland seems to think that there is danger of a portion of the Unitarian church drifting into that which is purely ethical, and abandoning that which is theistical. I repeat that this is an impossibility. Ethical study has no base or substructure except theism. I do not believe that there is a human being of fair intelligence now living who is not a theist, not necessarily in accordance with the ideas of a certain bishop, pope or other theologian, but all are *per se* theists. I think that the Unitarians of this country are perfectly united, and will ever continue to be on all essential points, and that all controversies are unwise and entirely unnecessary. The sole desire should be to see who could do the most good, and he who makes the best and the greatest number of the best lives will have gone far toward recommending His methods to universal acceptance. He will ever join hands with the theist, but ever shun the pessimist.

J. M. S.

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI.

The Some.

THE "B. W.'S".

One afternoon last autumn, after school, there was a bustle and buzz about the premises, and we were soon aware that the youngsters in the block were about to crystallize into a club. There were two or three preliminary meetings, where there seemed to be as much chattering as at a congress of black-birds. The aristocratic and democratic tendencies came in conflict; at one of the first meetings they had to face an issue—should the Jew be allowed membership? Said democracy, "All who behave themselves can join." Said aristocracy, "No! we will have only just ourselves." Then diplomacy came to the rescue and we overheard the little nominating committee suggest that the opposition be "made president, then she will be pleased and give up." A few days later I ventured to inquire how they were getting on. "Ho, ho!" laughed my informant; "Nell did not understand that a president was just to put the motions we made, and make suggestions we could act on if we thought best. Why! she supposed she was just to boss the whole thing! said that we couldn't have those girls, and must now come to order and do as she bid us; so we voted them in, and she left, and we made Rebecca (the Jewess) president."

Then one of the boys thought it would be more manly to

have a club by themselves, and they withdrew, leaving the five girls to perfect their play. Of course they must have a name and an object. After much counseling together they settled on "I. S."—"Industrial Souls", but somebody laughed at this as very pretentious. This grieved them a little, they were going to work and wanted a name that would indicate their intention in that direction; and then "Souls seemed such a good Bible name"; so they had taken to that. However, they changed it to "B. W.", the initials being all they gave the public; what they stood for was their secret. Of course we never guessed it aloud. Their triple aim was Education, Industry and Finance. Having only three unengaged afternoons a week after school, they disposed of them thus. Two were devoted to teaching. Those afternoons we were requested to vacate the back parlor, the teachers would come trudging in with little chairs, and the wee tots trotting along; desks were improvised out of soap boxes, and a very orderly school conducted for an hour or more, when they closed by marching out to the music of a song. The scholars were quiet and obedient, the teachers prompt and dignified; altogether it seemed quite a model school.

The industrial section met once a week. One member read aloud, while the others worked. If, from any cause, which I think was rare, any one was compelled to be absent, she sent in her door fee and gave an hour to the work before the next meeting. They have made various little articles, which they intend offering for sale soon.

Their financial resources are the penny at the door entrance fee, the proceeds of the entertainment and the sale that is to be. Their first public entertainment was recently given and was a thoroughly enjoyable affair, and gotten up entirely by themselves. We were favored with very interesting reports from the officers; their terseness was charming. The secretary informed us that they had "elected their officers very satisfactorily and worked harmoniously". The society consists of five members,—a president, two vice-presidents, a secretary, and a treasurer. They also extended a gracious and cordial invitation to the "H. B. C." (into which the boys had resolved themselves) to join them next fall when they began again. We were entertained with a speech from a popular ministerial friend of theirs, charades, tableaux and numerous recitations, among which were "Dorothea Dump and Barbara Bright", "Barbara Freitchie", "The Smack in School". The latter was given a somewhat original rendering. When the little damsel came to the climaxing word "smack", the other four, just out of sight, brought their hands together with a quick, sharp slap. They said in reply to my query how they got that idea, "Oh, we thought that would give it an emphasis." The audience gave them a rising vote of thanks for the entertainment, and some one suggested that, when they could get so much for a nickel right at home, it was hardly wise to go farther and pay more and be no better entertained.

REPORTER.

Notes from the Field.

CINCINNATI—CLEVELAND.—There was some fun at the Cincinnati Conference after all. We print, without permission, some Conference Notes reported to a Unity Club meeting at Cleveland,—which reach us in a round-about way:

The Cleveland delegation in attendance upon the recent Conference at Cincinnati returned to this city on Saturday evening. They report an earnest and important conference. Between Dayton and Springfield the wrecks of the recent storms were manifest in forest and field. The "Mad River" (the conductor said that was the name of it) had got up out of its bed, and here and there had sown the green wheat-fields with ghastly tears, which the farmer will have to sow over again. In one patch of oak forest close by the track half the trees were torn up by the roots and laid prostrate, or broken and splintered by the lightning's bolt. Many buildings along the way

were roofless or set adrift from their anchorage. At times the train moved very cautiously, owing to the loosened road-bed beneath, and at one point the last car had but just passed when the earth settled and the rails spread apart. This, however, had no connection with the broad-gauge principles of the delegation, but was due solely to the preceding storms.

At Springfield the delegates were met by a representative of the City Transfer Company and invited to a drive through the town, taking the cars again at a point farther on. This hospitable reception was as pleasant as it was unlooked-for, since the party were traveling *incognito* as they supposed. It was later discovered that the high bridge had been washed away in the city and that the same attention had been paid to the secular passengers upon the train.

The delegates were most diligent in their attendance at all the meetings of the Conference. One even went without her dinner in order to visit between sessions an educational institution in which she was interested. But experience in kitchen-garden economics had made her equal to the emergency, and stepping into a small bakery upon the way she procured a simple and frugal meal in the shape of a penny bun. This distances Thoreau's *menu* by the shore of Walden Pond. It should be said here, that it was from no mere saving of expense that this was done, and the same person afterward of her own free will gave a penny to the man who carried her satchel to the station from the hotel.

One of the finest essays read at the Conference came from Cleveland. It was neatly written on eight-inch quarto paper, and had the appearance of a classic papyrus-roll as it was unwrapped from the half-inch band of exquisite old-gold silk with which it was tied. The humane resolution, which passed the Conference, against the slaughter of birds for millinery and decorative uses, was also introduced by a Cleveland delegate. This resolution was written on plain paper and had no silk band attached. It may be added here that the best *pun* of the Conference came also from the Cleveland delegation*, and the financial success of the collection at the Sunday-school meeting on Friday was credited largely to representation of the same delegation in the management.

After such diligent and devoted attendance upon the Conference meetings as we have here indicated, it was but fitting that the whole delegation should be invited by Cincinnati friends to remain over Friday night and attend the grand rehearsal in Music Hall, which they gladly did. The gentlemen of the party treated the whole company to delicious soda on the way from the concert to the hotel, and the silent stars looked approvingly down from their far heights. For lighter details of these memorable meetings our readers are referred to the full reports which will soon appear in the pages of UNITY.

CHICAGO.—The lesson for the noon teacher's meeting, Monday, May 24, was Psalm 103, and the golden text, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." The meaning of the expression at the beginning of this text was questioned. We ask the Lord to bless *us*, but how can *we* bless the Lord? Was it used only in the sense of praise and thanksgiving? Mr. Utter, the leader, thought it conveyed a stronger shade of meaning. Mr. Jones believed it expressed the grateful desire of the heart to make some return for all the benefits received. Mr. Utter classified this psalm as one which is more used, probably, than any other, in family worship, being so distinctively a hymn of devotion. The leader thought it was difficult to analyse the psalm as it was so peculiarly emotional. He called attention to Robertson Smith's division of Psalms and their probable dates, as set forth in the Encyclopedia Britannica. Mr. Blake called attention to the religious significance of the mythic element which has gathered around the ideal David. The loving lore of a people, which drapes a hero king, is worth more than the historic reality. At the next meeting the course of study for the coming winter will be considered.

WASHINGTON TERRITORY.—Missionary Greer writes us that at Seattle a lot is contracted for at \$1,500, and that they are figuring for a church to cost \$3,500, which will be the first Unitarian church in the Territory. Another one is needed at Tacoma, and UNITY bespeaks the co-operation of all friends in these undertakings, but we would venture the suggestion whether in that land of free pine a \$1,500 church is not a wiser thing to begin with than a \$3,500 one. Put the taste of the more expensive into the cheaper church and it will be more honest and perhaps more home-like. Let us build more small churches, if we would have greater need of larger ones.

* Which pun the writer refers to is not known, but possibly that "the ladies were very well *sooted* with their rooms in Cincinnati". A gloomy truth.—Ed.

Unity Church-Door Pulpit.

SERIES III

NO. 7

WHAT MAKES A CHURCH SUCCEED: OR, THE PRIVATE AND THE OPEN CHURCH.

BY REV. CHARLES F. DOLE.

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but Righteousness and Peace and Joy in the Holy Spirit.—Romans xiv: 17.

We have asked the question what makes a church succeed? What makes anything succeed? It is that it does what is its characteristic purpose to do. The draught horse is a success that can pull, the knife that can cut, the painting that can give delight. This would be commonplace, if men did not every day forget it and think a thing ought to succeed by something else than by its characteristic purpose. So few are there who can keep to the purpose of their work, that whoever merely does that is sure to succeed. It is a kind of genius.

Suppose a kindly millionaire were to start a mill to do good with; but suppose that he did not insist upon skill or upon the quality of his goods, and that he required no dividends of the mill. What is the trouble with this philanthropic mill, that it runs down, that its goods have no sale, that it finally bankrupts the kindly millionaire and leaves his workmen worse off than before? The trouble is that the mill is made to do what is not the purpose of a mill. From the point of view of philanthropy the mill must do what a mill is for; the goods must be of standard quality and they must bring in a profit, or the industry could not be maintained. So much for the failure of a thing when it tries to be something else than what it was meant for; yes, if it tries to be something better, when that something was not its real purpose. As though anything was better for a thing than to be the best possible of its kind.

The purpose of the church.

What makes a church succeed is the same as makes anything succeed. It is by doing precisely that which it is the purpose of a church to do. And what is the characteristic purpose of a church, which if it does, it is a success? Our text expresses it. The kingdom of God, says the text, is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy spirit. Our idea of the characteristic purpose of the church grows out of an ideal of the true purpose of a man. With one consent we deny that a man is a creature who is born substantially to eat and drink and exist, or who fulfills his nature by accumulating riches and outrivaling his fellows. Our ideal of a man is one who loves, pities, helps, carries happiness and comfort, obeys duty and trusts God. The church is to help make that sort of man. It is to train children to be helpers, workers, saviors; friendly, hopeful, trustful men and women; as we love to say putting it in illustrative and personal form, after the fashion of Jesus. A church which makes such thorough people as that, does what it is intended to do and succeeds, as the mill succeeds that does precisely what it is made for.

False ideas of the church.

Though this seems perfectly plain, there is a pitiful tendency to stray from it, and to judge the church, not by its own purpose, but by the purpose of something else and especially by the meat and drink standard. Is such a church strong? it is asked, meaning do the people in it have wealth. Is there good society in it? they ask, meaning whether they will have social advantages. Do the young people have a good time? meaning whether the church provides social parties and dramatic entertainments. We only need to state this sort of feeling to see that it is altogether astray from the purpose of a

church, namely, the establishing a brotherhood of righteous faithful, helpful lives. "Yes", we say, "this is what we mean; this is what we are here for." This is the old cardinal idea of the liberal churches. We come back to it, as scattered soldiers return to their colors. There is not one of us who cares for our church at all, unless substantially on this moral and religious basis. We are too practical people, we are too business-like to believe in keeping the church up in this age of the world for entertainment, or amusement, or as a mere social club. It is not a success viewed in these respects. There are other ways of reaching such purposes more directly and economically.

The Private church.

There is a possible question, however, as to the scope of our work. It might, for example, be claimed by some that each individual church had a sort of private character. Here are a body of families who know each other, whose children meet at school and grow up into society together. Such a body of families organize primarily for the sake of doing the work of a church for themselves and their children. "For the most effective work among ourselves and for those who join us", they say, "we need a certain degree of comfort and privacy. We are used to comfortable surroundings; we are sensitive; we want ample space; we like to have not only the same pew but the corner seat in it; we enjoy the sermon more quietly so. While perfectly ready to welcome the occasional stranger, we do not think, as a rule, that to be the most desirable church for families, which is thronged by strangers or which has a miscellaneous congregation. At any rate we have certain rights as the people who erected the church and own it; we contrived the church, such as it is, on purpose to secure the comfort, the space, the sense of family privacy, the absence of incongruous and disturbing elements, in short, the precise conditions which, for the most of us, are an aid towards our enjoying the service most completely. We honestly fear, therefore, that we should not get as much good from our church if you broke in upon these favorite conditions. We are ready, however, to do our share for other people; we will have evening services; we will build mission churches, and free churches for other neighborhoods and for the people who cannot afford the expense of our kind of church; we will have seats here, too, most cheerfully, as many as possible, for any who like to come. Only we must recognize the fact, that, to secure what we need, ours must be substantially a private church; otherwise some who are now happy in their church relations will lose enjoyment and therefore the profit of the church service, and perhaps give up the church altogether; and so more harm will be done than good. Thus more or less consciously some feel, who at the same time are quite friendly in spirit and are neither to be called aristocratic or exclusive; who want their church to realize its religious mission. They feel so out of regard to comfort and privacy and their individual rights. They think that there is room in the world for both kinds of churches, the mission church and the private or family church. Thus substantially a friend in an orthodox church said lately, though somehow he was not sure that his feeling was right. "He wanted his pew to himself", he said.

Let us examine this feeling with very great respect for those who indulge it. Let us recognize that many of us

may know something what it is to like comfort and privacy. We agreed that the characteristic purpose of this church is to establish on earth, in the largest way possible, a brotherhood of love and faithfulness. It is not merely to establish such a brotherhood among the families who built and own their church home, nor among the families who now worship there, but throughout their community and so far as they can reach. To quote a few words from an editorial in the *Boston Advertiser*: "If the supposed aristocratic tendency in Protestantism, the dealing with a part of the community to the neglect of the interests of the whole, can be overcome, an important forward step has been taken. If the pulpits can come nearer the people, if the churches can widen their sympathies and make their methods more elastic, all classes will be reached, and the whole of society will feel the moral element which the clergy are now happily bringing into the settlement of the labor question. . . The opportunity of the clergy and of their churches is still imperfectly understood. The ministrations of the parish must still be broadened immensely toward the people, until, as is often the case in the Roman communion, the gathering at religious services is a part of their social enjoyments, if our great laboring population is to be profoundly moved by higher and spiritual considerations. . . If the words spoken in the pulpit can be supported in the town and in the village by the practical measures that have the weight of Christian brotherhood behind them, our churches collectively may accomplish much for the social and spiritual uplifting of those over whom, in recent years, they have been losing their influence."

If we ever contrived then to say to our community that we only believed in a limited brotherhood of homogeneous families, we should be denying that we believed in Jesus's kind of brotherhood at all. For Jesus's brotherhood was of the most heterogeneous kind, with all grades of society and all stations and ranks. Jesus's kind of brotherhood welcomed all on equal terms—Nicodemus and Joseph and the fishermen and Judas Iscariot, as long as he chose to come. And Jesus, who had a most sensitive organization, took them all by the hand and made friends of them.

But suppose for a moment that we were organized primarily for the sake of making the best possible Christians out of ourselves and our children. How should we make the best possible Christians—that is, men and women of Jesus Christ's spirit? Making reasonable allowance for bodily comfort and the help that comes to devotion from our surroundings, is it the right direction or the wrong direction towards our beautiful ideal of God's children, to humor our sensitiveness? Is it a help to live the unselfish and fearless life, if at church we encourage ourselves to be offended at trifles? Is it a training to live the life above annoyance and worry, if our happiness at church depends on the circumstances of the spot we sit in, and has to be spoiled by petty disturbances of our comfort or freedom? Is it not rather a help towards our ideals, if in one place at least we aim to take the level of our ideals, if here we encourage a large, tolerant, magnanimous, friendly view of everything?

Yes, if, as we take for our example one who "pleased not himself" and died on a cross, we are glad to have shown us some slight sacrifice of comfort or prejudice that we can make for the brotherhood.

"We cannot help our sensitiveness", it is answered; "we were made so."

Possibly we have largely made ourselves so; at any rate it makes all the difference whether we try to help it or indulge it; whether the church is a place to coddle our sensitiveness and let it grow more distressing, or whether we hold the church to be a place to rise above sensitiveness into the light and freedom of true and large-hearted men.

The need of restfulness. And here we explain the demand that tired minds and bodies make that the church shall give them restfulness. What they want is not bodily rest nor that cheap thing, to have no thoughts to arouse conscience and stir feeling; neither is it a private sort of rest-

fulness, as though you were shut off from every one else, but it is the restfulness of a higher mood and a more generous temper; it is the restfulness of men who put away selfishness and trust themselves in common worship to the love of God; it is the restfulness of those who, though humbled, see their ideals, stand with the eternal verities and bow before new duties. This sort of restfulness makes the tired mind new and fresh; it stirs the blood in gladness, as if body and soul were at harmony. It is a hindrance to such restfulness as this to permit ourselves to be fretted by our surroundings. It is the essence of this restfulness to take a broad, cheerful view of the world, wherein we say "all is for the best". And is all for the best, in the great world, storms, hurricanes and deaths, and are the little things that happen in our surroundings at church not for the best? It is clear, then, that the securing the very purpose of church for ourselves blocks the way against our going in the direction of our own individual comfort, our sensitiveness, our idiosyncrasies, our private rights. The purpose of the church says: You already everywhere else do enough and more than enough for your comfort, your sensitiveness and your love of privacy; here you want to go the opposite way; here you want to let yourself think of these things least of all.

But some one asks, "Do we not want peace in a church? And when things are going on very well do we not defeat the purpose of a church, if we raise questions to disturb the prevailing serenity?" And what is peace in a church? Not surely the peace of a grave-yard, but the peace which belongs to friends. It is not peace among friends, when we must keep still for fear lest some one will be disturbed or offended. But it is peace when, if friends differ, each tries to see from the other's point of view as well as his own. It is peace where all want to get at the truth and do right more than to have their own way. Such is the kind of peace that we strive to keep in a home, where no inmate could be really happy, if he had to live in fear of breaking the peace. So in the broader family of the church we want that same peace, wherein each treats the other on the side of his good nature, not on the side of his bad nature. We actually learn, therefore, what true peace is, and get needed practice in winning it by raising friendly questions whether we are doing our best to make the church a success.

The best kind of church for the children. Now apply the same test of our purpose to see what is best for the children of the family church.

Suppose a class of children at Sunday-school (and we have heard of such things in Sunday-schools even in liberal churches), who try to keep the class to themselves and their own set of friends. What shall we say to such exclusiveness that negatives the very idea of the Sunday-school, that instead of teaching Jesus's spirit teaches the opposite spirit of unfriendliness; what shall we say to such a class, if they happen to know that in any respect their parents think of their church as private and like to keep to themselves in it? For whatever you say to justify men's tendency to cliques and sets, the purpose of the church is to counteract it. The church represents mankind standing together, as men always do stand, when they meet on the highest level. You cannot check the cliquish and selfish tendency, as it begins in children, if they find that the church is a place of cliques and sets and private rights. Nay, more; we do positive harm to our children as by object-lesson, if we let them see us nettled and worried by trifles at church, who presently in turn will grow more thin-skinned than we are. We train the child the wrong way, if he sees that we make special account in church of our privacy, our comfort and our surroundings. There is a distinct good on the other hand that you do a child when shoulder touches shoulder, the comfortable spaces are filled up for a while, and men are seen to meet, not as separate individuals, but as brothers on a common level. Our children are in special danger of narrowness; they need this particular influence to broaden their natures

and open their eyes to see how much higher the immortal brotherhood is than our little cliques and sets. If there is some crowding, and occasionally petty inconvenience, at a thronged church, it is worth amply more than it costs us in moral results.

We are bound, therefore, to decide on every consideration, that the private idea of the church in its most refined form does not bear the light of the cardinal principle of a church. Any tendency whatever to a private church is a wrong tendency that defeats the purpose of a church, that does not help, but hinders, the production of broad, generous and kindly men and women.

The Missionary church. The fact is, there is but one normal type of church, and that is a Missionary church. It is the most open and free kind of church. It throws all private barriers down. Every one says "ours" of every part of it; no one can say "mine" of any part; no one can be obliged to give up his pew for lack of means, or, as in some churches, to have insufficient sittings for the household. If it provides comfort and beauty, if it gives carpeted floors and cushioned seats, it is because it wants to provide one place where all men who choose, without distinction, can meet on a common level of sympathy. Its comfort is for the common advantage, not private. If the church goes one step in the direction of mere luxury, such as forbids anyone to come, if the people of a church go one step in this direction by a style of dress unsuitable to the common meeting of rich and poor, that step is to turn the church from its purpose. So, too, if there is some regular assignment of seats, it is not for the purpose of individual privacy and exclusiveness, but for the greater convenience of all. It is that every family may have as many seats as they need, and that strangers can be welcomed without confusion.

If the prevailing wish of our people already is to realize this sort of church, we cannot state too clearly what its principle is. We have something else nobler to reach in church and Sunday-school, we insist, than to be thinking of private rights and comforts and our surroundings and our sets of friends. Our very object in coming here is to learn and win that broader manhood and sweeter womanhood which Jesus teaches, which forbids every breath of jealousy, envy, pettiness, suspicion, selfishness. Here, at least, we deny ourselves such unworthy thoughts; here at least we try to think and feel as we ought always to think and feel.

Such is the Missionary church, where every one is made to be at home and welcomed to be a member; where a gentle courtesy prevails to disarm fear and diffidence and diffuse a prevailing sense of general cheerfulness; where no semblance of private rights makes one appear to differ from another; where the habitual body of worshipers constantly aggregate new members to themselves, constitute at once the church, the congregation and the parish, learning, bearing burdens and giving together, consulting and voting together, always in sympathy because acting towards a common end—a perfect democracy, nay, better, a Christian brotherhood.

Can there be a doubt that this is the only ideal of the church? that Jesus would have repudiated any other as false? that the Christ spirit in us all answers to this and urges us towards it?

The sole test of success. We have established a certain principle whereby to know whether or not a church is successful. Do not tell us that its treasury is full. Do not tell us how much wealth there is in it, or how many men of note are its members; that men outside wait to get seats in it, and that its young people have most delightful sociables.

For these all might be, and the church departing from its purpose. The people might not be growing more Christ-like and devoted. The sense of brotherhood might be feeble and the missionary spirit wanting. There might be more generous self-sacrifice in some little society that met in an upper hall. But tell us that this church is full of men and women whom you can count on to follow

truth and duty. Tell us that these people, every year, live more like whole men, the sons of God. Tell us that the spirit of cordiality fills the church and overflows in words and looks. Tell us that strangers love to come here for the sense of freedom and friendliness.

Tell us that the poor are here as the rich, being made to forget that they are poor. Tell us that the young people tolerate no barriers of sets and cliques when they come to Sunday-school or gather at the parish festivals, (and there is a kind of festival in which we believe when all learn to put selfishness and selfish whims, tastes and preferences aside, and devote themselves to the enjoyment and profit of all). Tell us that the people are loyal, truthful and intelligent, so that, wherever they go on the earth, they will take the spirit of their church with them to make churches like it. Tell us this of your church: that it is actually establishing a brotherhood of honest, loyal, loving, trustful, glad hearts, and we want no other proof that the church is a success than the single proof that it does precisely what a church was meant to do.

The sole test of methods. There is a constantly recurring question about methods in everything human. Old methods fail to do the work or prove to be outgrown. There is a single test of all questions of methods,—what method best serves the characteristic purpose? You own a factory which makes screws. Your superintendent tells you that the method of the factory is bad. "What", you say, "is not the machinery good?" "Yes", he answers, "but it is not designed to make the best screws."

And he shows you wherein the old machinery fails to produce the quality that is coming into demand. You do not say, "The old machinery is good enough for us." You do not say, "Let the new mills use the new machinery, it is no use for an old mill." You know that a mill that does not produce the best screws that can be had is sooner or later going down. You spend money, you pull out the old machinery if necessary, or alter it; you undergo temporary trouble to secure that your mill shall do precisely the best work that it is intended to do. Yes, the stronger and richer your company is, the more strenuous you are to have the most perfect appliances and the best quality of product.

So precisely in things moral. It does not do for a school, it does least of all for a church to say, "Yes, such and such a method is best, but the old does well enough for us." It does not do for a church, when it is told that there are better appliances to produce better results, to answer, "We are content with poorer results. Let other churches, let new churches, let feeble churches try for the ideal things, we are well enough off." For all that a church is good for, all that gives it a reason for being, is that it does whatever is right, regardless of trouble or sacrifice. The church that is so well off that it does not care to do better, has begun already to go to ruin, having lost its distinctive object. And it is only a question of time when deadness sets in. Do not say then of the church that such a thing is right and ideal but it is not safe,—which you would not say even of a mill. But once having said that a course or method is right, take it, since that is what you are here for.

Who supports the church. There is a very common error which one constantly hears regarding the support of the church.

Here at least you touch the material side of meat and drink. The church, it is said, must have money and they who furnish money support it. Such an one, it is said, has given a great deal of money for many years; what would the church do without him? But this question of support has to be answered with reference to the purpose of the church, namely, the production of true, loving and trustful men and women. Is it money then that supports the church? Was it money that supported the church when the Master had not where to lay his head? No, the money might be even a curse and burden to the church. Suppose, what has actually happened at times, that one man nearly supported the church, who was bad, who got his

money by fraud. Would that man's money help establish a brotherhood of peace and good will? It would help the church more not to have a dollar of that man's money; or better yet, if he made restitution, like Zaccheus, so that he had not any money left to give.

Suppose again what is told of a certain church where proprietors gave directions to have no one shown within their pew doors. How could a sense of brotherhood and love grow in the presence of such families? Or suppose, in one of the old proprietary churches, a man supported the church because he had inherited a number of pews, while it was commonly known that he did not care for the church, and never went to it, and would stop giving his money if he had not the pews; would he support the church? There would be a sense of hollowness and unreality about this man's gift; we should rather go to him frankly and ask him to give us what expressed his honest belief in the church and his wish to help establish Jesus's brotherhood among men. We hold stoutly that the church wants no support that is not genuine; the church wants no support that men give as it were in fear of the sheriff or a lawyer's letter. Lop off what is not genuine, as you prune a tree down to the live wood. It grows better so.

We heartily appreciate the generosity of wealthy givers for the church. But it is because their gifts stand for reality, for moral quality, for loyalty and friendly interest, for their convictions, their love of right, their trust in God. It is their loyalty and good will that support the church. It is their loyalty that prompts their gifts and makes us grateful. We repudiate the idea altogether as unworthy of their intelligence, which we sometimes hear ignorantly spoken, that they would not give unless they had an equivalent in private rights, private space and comfort. What have such petty things to do with the purpose of a church? We affirm, because we know them and honor them, that their loyalty and good will are the best possible and the only genuine or permanent basis on which to expect their gifts.

This leads us to see that the church has many supporters who are often not thought of, who are hardly thanked, who sometimes have no voice at all in the management of affairs. What do you say of a Sunday-school teacher who trains her classes for years to be just, to love men, and to trust God? Would any amount of money that did not express loyalty support the church as she supports it? What do you say of the young men that we depend on to help at every entertainment, who serve us as ushers, who ask to be told what to do, and they do it? Surely they support the church, too.

Ah, there are many supporters of the church whom we never see here at all. A helpless invalid through thirty years went the other day to her rest. But if the services of our church have been of comfort and help towards faith and hope, you have felt the support that she was giving through the solid facts of her courage, her patience, her goodness, her trust in the abiding Love. She has bidden the minister say to you that it is true, that "all things work together for good for the children of God". She has helped assure you in trying hours, that life in God's world is amply worth living. Was she not a supporter of the church, seeing that she helped us to live the life of the children of God? Countless humble, quiet lives like these support the church, and are the church. The stone and mortar may crumble, for the stone and mortar of this house are only the symbols of the invisible brotherhood established forever in the hearts of men who love each other and trust God.

The final question of the future of the church already is answered. What will become of the church? certain ask. We cannot say what will become of any particular church. That depends on whether the people in it keep to its characteristic purpose. But so far as any church aims to make a brotherhood of loyal hearts, so far as the church purposes to help men to its utmost ability to live as Sons of God after Jesus's

fashion, there cannot be any fear for the church. There is no sign that the demand for such kind of lives is falling off. No, there is a demand for more of them, that no church more than begins to meet. You can appeal to this demand with unfailing confidence. There is no one to-day that despises that kind of product. There is no skeptic or doubter, no cynic, no grasping avarice, that does not have to confess that righteousness, mercy, love, friendliness, pure homes, noble manhood, complete womanhood, are the best things to be had in this world, and whatever institution will help produce them is worth being sustained.

The liberal churches have a grand opportunity. They stand first of all churches in the world for their freedom, for their enlightenment, and for their ideals of what human character is destined to be. But we fear for them by reason of a strange blending, on the one hand, of unworthy and groundless distrust, as though the good were all in the past, and, on the other hand of egregious self-complacency. It is a question whether, considering our means, we are not of all churches least in earnest and doing the least. We seem to be marking time for others to come up. We admire our ideals, instead of trying to realize them. We esteem ourselves to be cordial and generous, but we do not perhaps like better than others to be called upon to stir out of our comfortable ruts. It fills me with alarm for our liberal churches when so many in them say of this and that which is proposed: "It is right; it is best, but it is not safe, it is not practicable, it is not comfortable." It is all over with the liberal churches when that cry prevails. The torch goes on from the unworthy hands of those who think it unsafe to hold to others who shall cry: "The thing is right, let us do it; the thing is ideal, let us help make it real."

The Study Table.

A Stroll with Keats. Ticknor & Co., Boston., A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago. \$1.50.

The list of finely-illustrated single-poem-books is creditably reinforced by "A Stroll with Keats", a small octavo volume, in full gilt, modestly but tastefully ornamented, in which Keats's lines beginning:

"I stood tip-toe upon a little hill"

are first printed in their original order, and then line by line, or lines by lines, with illustrations. The verses, compact, occupy seven pages, and the picture and verse feature fills the thirty-four pages remaining. Two or three opening pages are also devoted to illustration. The pages are delicately tinted inside a white half-inch margin. In the pictorial parts a tall maiden is represented as strolling through the scenes depicted in the verses. Frances Clifford Brown is the artist. How many people of taste will gladden other people's hearts by sending this book to them as a present!

E. R. C.

Literary Style and Other Essays. By William Matthews, LL. D. Fourth edition. S. C. Griggs & Co., Chicago.

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E. R. C.